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Copy for Secretary Rm

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 17, 1961

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STATE DEPT DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW

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IPS by S. Ifshin Date: 5/8/00

Other Agency Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Memorandum of Meeting on Berlin, July 17, 1961

Present were: The President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Treasury, Attorney General, General Taylor, Mr. Sorensen, Mr. Bundy

The Secretary of State opened the meeting by stating the general view of his Department that we should begin on a low key, if possible. At the same time, necessary military strength should be built up and the Department would concur in a budgetary increase of \$4.3 billion and a call of National Guard and Reserve units if needed.

Secretary McNamara made it clear that a declaration of national emergency was not needed before September 1st or October 1st, although there would be a probable need for a call of air units before the end of the year. After prolonged discussion of the components of the \$4.3 billion requested, it appeared that immediately needed actions, for procurement, for Civil Defense, for the build-up of the three STRAF divisions, the possible provision of 64,000 additional men to fill out U. S. NATO forces, and other similar missions, would produce a budgetary request of \$3 billion, while the cost of large-scale troop calls under a declaration of national emergency would amount to about a billion and a half more (the difference between this total of \$4.5 billion and the total of \$4.3 billion with which the discussion began is explained by \$200 million for Civil Defense). There appeared to be general agreement that there need be no present request for a declaration of national emergency, and it appeared to be the dominant judgment that a budgetary request for \$3 billion would be preferable to a request for \$4.5 billion, since the additional money for Reserve units could undoubtedly be obtained after they were called up. Secretary McNamara's preference went the other way, and it was agreed that this question might usefully be discussed by the President with certain leaders of the Armed Forces committees of the Congress. It was also agreed that the President would review these questions of military policy with the Joint Chiefs of Staff before final decision was made.

The Secretary of State said that the second large item for discussion on Wednesday would be the planning of the negotiating position of the U.S.,

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preparatory to discussion with our Allies. What negotiating position should we have, and how should its development be timed? On this point, discussion was inconclusive, and it was agreed that decision should await presentation of the "political scenario" on Wednesday. The Secretary indicated his view that the opening posture of the West should be an emphasis upon self-determination, and that probably we would wish to spin out the discussion in order to make it difficult for Mr. Khrushchev to proceed with concrete steps at an early stage.

The third point which the Secretary brought forward was the question of our eventual position toward the DDR. The President made plain his belief that since we shall have to talk with representatives of that regime at some stage, we should not now take so strong a line that these later talks will look like a defeat. Our rights in Berlin certainly cannot be discussed, but there can at an appropriate stage be a discussion of the way in which our rights are to be maintained without impairment. The Secretary mentioned the possibility of proceeding first through conversations in which the West and East Germans talk together (a notion which has echoes in Khrushchev's Vienna Aide Memoire), but no decisions, even of a preliminary sort, were reached, except that discussion of the "political scenario" might be lengthy and should be continued after the NSC meeting of the steering group if necessary.

Secretary McNamara made clear that the Defense Department would not be able to present a military operations plan on July 19. It would, on the other hand, have a shopping list of desired allied military actions. The State Department will present a similar paper on U. S. and allied steps in a campaign of economic warfare. The President made clear his concern for a strong U. S. team on this subject, mentioning among others the name of Milo Perkins, a name which Secretary Dillon agreed to check up on.

General Taylor asked about propaganda proposals, and it was agreed that concrete plans in this area should be developed by USIA and submitted through the Department of State. One fairly desirable event is a plebiscite in West Berlin, probably after the German election -- though the President was not convinced on this matter of timing.

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The President's speech had initially been planned for Monday, July 24, but Mr. Sorensen indicated that this seemed somewhat too early, and it was agreed that he would suggest a definite date at the NSC meeting on Wednesday, July 19.

It was agreed that many items of political, economic and military negotiation should be ready for serious discussion at the meeting of Foreign Ministers in early August. State Department will send an expert team sometime in the week of July 24, and on this team Defense and Treasury will be represented. Meanwhile, Secretary McNamara proposes to see General Norstad in Paris over the coming week end, in order to get his views and to work out a strong agreed position if possible.

The President ended the meeting with a discussion of organizational framework of work on Berlin. At the lower level is the interdepartmental coordinating group under Mr. Foy Kohler. This committee will be responsible for day-to-day operations and detailed planning. It will report to the President through a steering group under the Secretary of State as Chairman, with the following additional membership:

11 Mon { Secretary of Defense  
Secretary of the Treasury  
The Attorney General  
Director, CIA  
Director, USIA  
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
General Taylor  
Mr. Bundy

The President's desire is that this group should meet once a week on Monday afternoons. Among its duties will be the clarification of items to be discussed at the fortnightly Thursday meetings of the National Security Council.

The President asked the Secretary of State whether there could be a similar interdepartmental working coordinating group for Laos and Viet-Nam reporting through the same steering committee. The Secretary replied that there were real difficulties here in the internal organization of the Department of State, but it was agreed that

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he would present a recommendation on this organizational question at the NSC meeting on Wednesday, July 19. It was agreed that fundamental responsibility for supervision and follow-up would rest with the steering group, initially with respect to Berlin, and if assignment is later given, with respect to Southeast Asia as well.

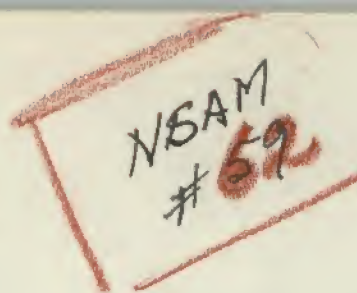
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McGeorge Bundy

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DRAFT RECORD OF ACTION

National Security Council Meeting  
July 19, 1961



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1. Political

The President and the Secretary of State have carefully reviewed together the political situation relating to Berlin, and their position will be stated in Presidential messages to Macmillan, de Gualle, Adenauer and the North Atlantic Council. The President's views will be further developed in his address to the nation July 25th.

2. Military

The President has authorized a prompt strengthening of the United States' military position, in the light of the general international situation. While the steps immediately authorized are related to improvement of U. S. capabilities in the next twelve months, the President considers these decisions to be steps in a continuing program for strengthening the armed forces. He expects at a later date to review further proposals from the Secretary of Defense relating to the long-time military position of the U. S.

The President intends that all possible steps be taken, without a present call for major ground units of the reserves or the National Guard, to give the U. S. the capability of deploying up to six additional divisions and supporting air units to Europe at such time as the international situation may require it. In connection with an operating

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decision to effect such a deployment, further measures will be taken to maintain adequate ground forces in the United States.

In pursuit of this decision, the President has directed the submission to the Congress of proposals for appropriate and other legislative authority necessary for this program, without the present declaration of a National Emergency.

In particular, the President has authorized a request for increases amounting to \$3.2 billion in new obligational authority.

The measures approved are those listed in Attachment 1 of Annex C of the documents prepared under date of July 18, 1961, by the Inter-departmental Coordinating Group in response to NSC Action Memorandum No. 59 of July 14, 1961, with the exception of Items 8, 18 and 22 of Attachment 1, and one-half of the sum allotted for Items 10A and 10C.

The President directed that negotiations be undertaken immediately with our allies looking toward their parallel participation in such a higher level of military readiness. In these discussions there will be no initial indication of any U. S. willingness to increase military assistance to our allies for these purposes.

3. Economic

*set forth in Annex B of the report of July 18*

The President approved the policy with regard to economic sanctions in the event of interference with access to West Berlin, and authorized immediate negotiations with our major allies on such a policy.



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The President directed the preparation of a tax proposal to be presented first in his radio address of July 25th. He decided that a decision on a request for stop-gap control legislation should be deferred until the latter part of August.

4. Information

The President assigned to the Director of the U. S. Information Agency the responsibility for coordinating the information activities of the U. S. Government capable of advancing international understanding of the U. S. position on Berlin.

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EYES ONLY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorandum of Conversation

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DATE: July 24, 1961

SUBJECT: Meeting of Steering Committee

PARTICIPANTS:

*Same meeting  
as in preceding  
pages.*

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Following are highlights of today's meeting.

1. The Secretary opened the meeting by reporting developments in connection with the Berlin crisis since the last meeting, mentioning in particular the despatch of the President's letters to Macmillan, Adenauer and de Gaulle on July 21; the despatch of similar communications to the other NATO governments and to Stikker on the following day and his own meeting with the British, French and German representatives to give them further details of the US program.

2. The Secretary reported and opened the discussion on the British aide-memoire received yesterday reporting their appeal to NATO for help on foreign exchange costs connected with the maintenance of their troops in Germany. It was agreed that the British problem was a serious one which had to be tackled but that it was important not to allow the impression be created that the British contemplated troop withdrawal or other action contrary to the proposed rapid build-up of the NATO military posture.

3. The Secretary then read to the group Prime Minister Macmillan's reply to the President's letter of July 21 in which the Prime Minister notably asked the President to restrain reference to

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an air raid shelter program in view of its possible effect in England where such a program was impracticable. Some discussion of this ensued and it was the general impression subject to later discussion with the President that there might be some misunderstanding on Macmillan's part as to the distinction to be made between air raid shelters and "fall-out" shelters which would be the subject of the President's proposals.

4. The Secretary mentioned Lord Home's speech yesterday in which he was reported to have referred to the possibility of accepting Soviet forces in West Berlin. He instructed that a full text of the speech be obtained in order to check this point which he could not believe was accurately reported.

5. The Secretary reported at some length regarding the difficulties created for the United States by conflict between the Tunisians and French in Bizerte with particular reference to the problem presented by the UN request for US transport to return Tunisian forces from the Congo to Tunisia.

6. In reply to the Secretary's reference to the undesirability of including any negotiating proposals in the President's speech on Tuesday, Mr. Bundy reported that drafting was now going on and the draft would probably be available for comment and suggestion by the end of the day.

7. Acting Defense Secretary Gilpatric reported on the status of DOD consultations with Congress with respect to the legislation which the President would send up on Wednesday in connection with the Berlin crisis. While he had not completed these consultations especially with the Republican leadership he felt that there would be no real problem about Congressional approval.

8. Attorney General Kennedy asked Mr. Murrow about progress with respect to a propaganda program and asked that an early report of what had been done and what was planned be submitted to the President.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 25, 1961

Meeting of the Interdepartmental Steering Group, Office of the Secretary of State, Monday, July 24, 1961, 11:00 a.m.

The Secretary of State opened the meeting by describing the Aide Memoire received from the British Government with respect to the balance of payment difficulties of the United Kingdom. Because of these difficulties, the British say they will be required to withdraw some troops from the Continent in the Fiscal Year beginning in April, unless new arrangements can be made for cooperative handling of the foreign exchange problems of NATO defense. Because of the immediate threat to Berlin, there will be no reduction of English forces before April, even in the absence of such arrangements.

Under Secretary Fowler felt it important that the President and other leading Americans be prepared to react by saying that this is not an unnatural position and indeed one to be expected. We might add that the British emphasis -- upon new cooperative methods of procurement, upon joint use of facilities, and upon the need for a common plan -- corresponds closely to our own view of what is needed.

The Secretary of State noted that the new United Kingdom division which is needed under our military proposal can perfectly well be raised and trained in the United Kingdom, from our standpoint.

The Secretary of State indicated his view that the British position derived from studies under Selwyn Lloyd which aimed at the balance of payments problem, and was not developed in response to our proposals for strengthening NATO forces in Europe. Yet it was a fact that they had our proposals before they finally approved and dispatched their Aide Memoire.

Secretary Rusk read Prime Minister Macmillan's letter to the President and noted that his ideas about negotiation gave us no difficulty since, in our own judgment, it also would be important to be in touch with the USSR for serious conversations considerably before a peace treaty became a fact. On Civil Defense, there was uncertainty about the real difference between the British position and our own, and it was agreed that the matter should be reviewed with Yarmolinsky of Defense (later in the day Mr. Yarmolinsky provided very useful information and comment for use in the President's speech).

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The Secretary of State then reported on the situation in Bizerte. It could not be worse. Neither side had consulted us. It blew up from Bourguiba's pressure on the French, pressure which had made the French bull-necked. The shooting had started overnight and we were caught in the middle. At present we are getting considerable strains from both parties. The Tunisians wish the United States to return 3100 troops from the Congo to Tunisia. We shall certainly have to return such troops in some numbers, though we have been delaying a flat response. Yet if we had to make a flat 100% choice, we would choose France. Bourguiba, Jr., called this morning to say flatly that the Tunisians would take help wherever they could get it. The French have not consulted us at any point, nor have they made clear their real intentions or purposes. They are not in Bizerte by clear treaty right, but rather under an exchange of letters which leaves the international position unclear. We have indicated to the French that we have decided in principle to undertake the plane lift, but the reaction was so cool that it may be necessary to make further representations.

Later in the morning, the matter was discussed with the President, and at his direction the Department of State is undertaking special examination of the possibility of handling the airlift by civilian planes, from both the U. S. and other Western countries, with U. S. financial support arranged through the United Nations. (The President believes that the U. S. must help to get the Tunisian troops back from the Congo, but he would prefer to do it in company with other nations and in civilian aircraft, if possible.)

In response to questions from the Attorney General, Mr. Murrow stated that he was undertaking the coordination of propaganda activities and would prepare a report showing the quantities of information that were being made available on the Berlin matter through various media.

*McGeorge Bundy*  
McGeorge Bundy

Copy to:

Secretary of State ✓  
Secretary of Defense  
Secretary of the Treasury  
The Attorney General  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Director, USIA  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
General Taylor  
Mr. Sorensen

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 31, 1961

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Minutes of Meeting of Inter-Departmental <sup>(Steering)</sup> (Coordinating) Group on  
Berlin, July 26, 1961, 5:15 p.m.

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Present: The President, the Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, Mr. Kohler, Mr. Nitze, Under Secretary Fowler, Mr. Hillenbrandt, Mr. Owen, Mr. Bundy

The President opened the meeting by asking about progress on our negotiating position. The Secretary responded saying that timing was a major problem. Should we propose a meeting before the 22nd Congress? The Germans might not approve, and he thought the topic should be one for discussion in the Paris working sessions.

The Secretary asked if Mr. Acheson had supplementary comments. Mr. Acheson said the problem was tough. He would advise against calling a peace conference, since that would bring many too many countries into the act. He also believed that it would be wrong at this stage to go to the United Nations.

Mr. Acheson believed that the outlines of any proposal would amount to a dressed-up form of the status quo, that such a dressed-up status quo might eventually include a four-nation agreement that they are not going to fight over Berlin, perhaps endorsed by NATO and by the members of the Warsaw Pact. (This endorsement would give a certain indirect role to the DDR.) At a later stage in the negotiations, Mr. Acheson said later, we might go a little further -- (1) there could be a discouragement of movements of population as distinct from acts of genuine political refuge; (2) there might be new trade arrangements; (3) we might give assurances on the Oder-Neisse boundary. Mr. Acheson advised against using this last counter unless it buys agreement, because in the view of the Germans it is a substantial issue. The Secretary of State argued that we might accept something like Solution C, in which each side might maintain its own theory with respect to an agreed factual situation.

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The President asked whether, in addition, we could agree to a UN presence and perhaps to token USSR participation in such a UN force. The Secretary of State suggested that we might suggest such a UN force for all of Berlin, but that any USSR participation would have to be miniscule, and thus in all probability unacceptable. In further discussion of timing, the Secretary and Mr. Acheson agreed that sometime after the German election but before the 22nd Congress, the United States should propose a conference to convene after the 22nd Congress. The Secretary of State saw a disadvantage in an earlier meeting in that Khrushchev will not want to spin out such meetings and we might come toward a further stage in the crisis sooner than we wish. (Outside the meeting, other students of the crisis have argued that in order to forestall the Soviets, it may be important to have a public Western proposal for negotiations at a future date not later than the end of the Foreign Ministers meeting in Paris.) In any event, before we prepare a proposal for negotiations, there should be speeches and propaganda papers, and in response to questions from the President, Mr. Kohler stated that there will now be energetic exploitation of the propaganda themes in the President's speeches and the U. S. aide memoire. The Department is also completing its White Paper on Berlin. The President asked again about a plebiscite in West Berlin, and the Secretary of State said the matter was under discussion in the Department of State.

In further comment on the timetable of discussions, the Secretary of State remarked upon the need for conversations between Thompson and Khrushchev, in which we might try to find out further what is on the Soviet leader's mind. Mr. Acheson commented upon the later stages of negotiations, remarking that the first round of discussion would certainly fail and that in the second round we might wish to bring up an incomplete proposal which would give us room for a few final concessions at the end. Such an intermediate proposal might include the notion of joint trusteeship of Berlin and of a four-power agreement not to fight.

Discussion then turned to the "paper stamping" issue. Mr. Kohler presented the elements of the argument developed in his memorandum on the subject. The President indicated his own preference for the opposite position, stated in Mr. Acheson's memorandum (attached). Mr. Nitze indicated that the Defense Department preferred Mr. Acheson's position, on the practical ground that it allowed for a



later decision on military action. It emerged from discussion that Mr. Acheson's recommendation is very close to the actual position of the U. S. in 1959 (a point which will be checked further). In Mr. Acheson's view, we should simply insist that there be no change in present procedures. We could hold to this line sharply, but under the procedures currently approved and supported by Mr. Kohler we should be making a change, in refusing to accept an act of stamping which we had accepted before. Yet we should be doing this for a reason that we had already admitted as invalid, back in 1959. Mr. Kohler later remarked that after all the fundamental change here is the Soviet withdrawal from participation in the four-power occupation, but Mr. Acheson's argument won the President's approval. Upon inquiry, the President was informed that the act of paper stamping is not in fact an act of approval, but rather one of bureaucratic registration of times of entry and departure, and on this understanding he thought that it would not make sense for us to sustain a position of refusing to permit such stamping.

Mr. Acheson believed that if this new U. S. position were made clear in advance, there would be no question of a concession and the earlier position would simply disappear. Both he and Mr. Nitze were sure that the United Kingdom would not hold to the current position, and the President agreed that we could not press the British on this point. Accordingly, it was agreed that the U. S. would allow the British position to prevail, without making an explicit concession during the working group sessions. The moment of decision will come during the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries. It was recognized that this change might not in fact make any difference in the Soviet position.

During the course of these discussions, Mr. Nitze reported that Brown of the British Labor Party thinks we ought to be prepared to go further than the currently proposed decision and be prepared to talk with the East Germans about the terms and conditions of access to West Berlin. At the President's request, Mr. Acheson stated his objections to this position; it was not a legal objection but a strong opposition to an obvious attempt to humiliate the United States. We should demean ourselves if we talk to these hired men, and he was certain that if the positions were reversed the Soviet Union would certainly not accept any such relationship. The President asked how we distinguished the Chinese Communists from the DDR,



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and the first answer was that we are not discussing operational issues with the Chinese; the second and more persuasive was that the Chinese Communists do after all represent a very large and powerful de facto political authority and are no man's puppets.

The decision, then, was to change the current United States position, in the course of appropriately managed diplomatic discussions, terminating in the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries; the new decision would be allowed to become public, or at least known to the Soviets, in ways which were not decided at this meeting.

*McGeorge Bundy*  
McGeorge Bundy

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THE PROBLEM OF THE BREAKING POINT ON ACCESS

If the Berlin crisis goes as far as a USSR-GDR Peace Treaty and a turn-over by the USSR to the GDR of the checkpoints on rail, road and barge routes to Berlin, the question will arise as to the moment at which to raise the issue which may lead to blockade of Berlin and, perhaps, to war.

Present agreed tripartite planning is to announce in advance of a demand by the GDR that a new agreement governing the modalities of access be negotiated with them, that not only will this not be done but that existing procedures must be altered. Under the new procedures a copy of what amounts to a bill of lading will be handed to East German officials at the checkpoint, but that they will not be permitted to follow existing practice of stamping on the copy retained by the shipper the date and hour of entering and exiting from a checkpoint. A fortiori they would not be permitted to exercise any further authority.

If the East Germans refuse this procedure the break occurs, and the blockade with all its consequences begins.

I differ from this view and, submit that while we should not yield to the GDR demand, directly or indirectly, that we negotiate a new agreement with them, we should announce that existing procedures have worked satisfactorily for years and that we do not propose to permit them to be altered in any respect whatsoever.

My reasons for taking this position are, first, that this position (of leaving well enough alone and not being the ones to demand a change in our favor) will appear reasonable and non-provocative, and, second, that our allies will move to this position in any event. To attach our prestige to a position from which we shall have to retreat is most unwise.

The British have only agreed to present contingency planning under great duress; in an emergency, they would almost certainly propose that the East Germans be allowed to perform the functions which the Soviets now discharge. There would probably be considerable European press and popular support for the British position; there would be a disinclination for seeming to make paper-stamping a casus belli, no matter how much we explained the underlying issue.

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The alliance would thus be divided over an essentially procedural question, at the very time when maximum allied unity was needed as a basis for possible armed action in defense of Berlin. The situation would be the more difficult since there might be some questioning in the U.S. press, public and Congress as to whether we had really chosen the most suitable issue on which to fight. There would also be grave difficulty in making our position plausible to the uncommitted countries.

All this would be apparent to the Soviets, and they would be encouraged to press ahead to exploit the Western disarray. In the face of Bloc pressures and allied disunity, it seems likely that the allies would eventually accept the same paper-stamping from the East Germans that they now accept from the Soviets. To avoid such a last minute change in our position under fire, it would be better to straighten out this issue beforehand.

Therefore, the Western powers should announce, when a peace treaty is concluded, that whoever mans the checkpoints may perform present procedures and no more. This would mean holding the same line against a variety of ostensibly minor changes in these functions which we have held for many years. The difference would be that it would be the East Germans, rather than the Soviets, who would be trying to make the changes. Allied unity could probably be more readily secured on defending this existing line than on trying to improve it at the time of a GDR take-over. And parity of treatment for the GDR would be easier for the USSR to accept as an outcome of the crisis, if they wanted a face-saving "out".

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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Berlin

2 August 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Today's Meeting with the Berlin Steering Group.

1. In the meeting with the Berlin Steering Group today I would suggest discussion of the following points which, to my knowledge, have not been definitely decided:

a. What should be the planned Allied reaction to an interruption of access to Berlin which affects only Allied traffic and not German civilian traffic? In other words, if the challenge is only to Allied rights and does not endanger the safety and well-being of West Berlin, is there any distinction to be made between this situation and one approximating a 1948-type blockade?

b. Under what conditions will a ground probe be used? Will consideration of an airlift precede or follow the result of a probe?

c. If we are reasonably sure that the East Germans will use force to bar Allied entry into Berlin, should we go at once to a garrison airlift or risk the defeat of a ground probe first?

d. At what point in our reactions would we want West German participation?

2. In partial response to these questions I would be inclined to take the following position:

a. There is a definite difference in the stakes involved between interference only with Allied traffic and a clear threat to West Berlin itself. Since the stakes are much higher in the latter case, so are the risks which we are justified in taking. The safety and freedom of West Berlin are, in my judgment, worth risking a war, whereas quadripartite rights are worth tough negotiating and non-military reprisals -- but short of war.

b. The purpose of a ground probe is to establish that we are not holding our rights to bluff. I, therefore, feel that we should

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risk having the ground probe repulsed before we go to a garrison airlift. I can see no justification for a civilian airlift until a more serious effort has been made on the ground to get through to Berlin. The garrison airlift would be so insignificant that, as a means for circumventing harassment to Allied traffic, it could be invoked relatively quietly.

MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

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SENSITIVE HANDLING

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TO:

~~FOR YOUR INFORMATION~~

8/3/61

Shown to Ball  
and Johnson

Secret  
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SENSITIVE HANDLING



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*Shown to  
Mr. Ball and  
Mr. Johnson  
8/4/61  
LW*

Record of Meeting, 4:30 p.m., August 3, 1961

Present: The President, the Secretary of State, Mr. Owen

1. The Secretary said that he hoped in Paris to (i) secure allied agreement to the military build-up; (ii) clinch preparations for economic sanctions; (iii) get a coordinated NATO propaganda effort into high gear.
2. The Secretary spoke of the possibility of an early instruction to Thompson to make a quiet approach to Khrushchev. One object would be to get Khrushchev engaged in a discussion of the access question. This object might better be achieved in private rather than in a formal talk.
3. The Secretary said that by the end of this month he thought the Western powers would be in a position to propose a Four Power Foreign Ministers' Conference. That Conference might take place in early October or early November. A meeting of the Heads of Western governments immediately concerned should take place beforehand in Bermuda.
4. The Secretary said that he hoped not to get very far into the content of our negotiating position in discussions at Paris. He did not think this was the time to press the Germans into making concessions on either the German or European security questions -- particularly in view of the upcoming elections. The President agreed, suggesting that the French and Germans would have to get the wind up before they were moved to give us the flexibility we will need on some issues in order to get the better guarantee of access we want. He thought that Ambassador Kennan's suggestions made sense but that this was not the time to push our allies. The Secretary suggested that we might be able to make some progress just by asking our allies the right questions. He reported German Defense Minister Strauss' remark to Mr. Acheson -- that the Germans have not yet faced up to the risk of war over Berlin; he thought that they will be more flexible when they do. The President added that our allies' negotiating mood may also mellow when they are asked to undertake costly military preparations.
5. The President asked what our counter-proposal to Khrushchev should be. The Secretary said that our initial proposal should be for a change in the status quo in our favor, to balance the change

that Khrushchev

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that Khrushchev is seeking in his favor. This would prepare the way for later hard bargaining.

6. The President asked about Solution "C". The Secretary described it as a series of reciprocal declarations between Western powers and the Communists, in which both sides would reserve their juridical positions and agree to preserve the physical status quo except for replacement of Soviet by East German personnel along the access routes. The Secretary said that we could not prevent Khrushchev from signing a treaty but we might be able to build up enough resistance thus to deter him from blocking our access after a treaty.

7. The Secretary said there was one point on which he wanted to make his position clear to the President before his discussions at Paris. Shooting should be an act of last resort; non-military means (e.g., an airlift and sanctions) should be exhausted first. Even a small probe could quickly get out of control.

8. The President suggested that a Defense Ministers' meeting be held at the end of August. He mentioned, as one of the questions which would require decision at some point, whether aircraft should be maintained in a state of non-nuclear readiness. In this case, a delay of several hours would have to ensue before they could use nuclear weapons, instead of a comparable delay before they could use iron bombs, as at present.

9. The Secretary said that while in Paris he would visit the NATO Council with the Attorney General. After Paris he would go to Italy to see Segni. He would write to the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers from Paris. The President thought well of the British suggestion that the Secretary come home by way of London.

10. The Secretary intended that Ambassadors Bruce, Dowling, Thompson, and Kennan constitute a standing group to provide ideas on Berlin. Kennan would also be keeping in touch with neutrals. The Belgrade meeting of neutral nations was briefly covered.

11. Tripartite consultation would take place in Washington. The Secretary would consult with the two Ambassadors; French and British members of the Standing Group would be brought in, as appropriate. This may not satisfy the French; they will have to be convinced that we meant what we said when we suggested that discretion would be needed.

12. The President

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12. The President asked about the possibility of a plebiscite in Berlin. The Secretary said that he would discuss this with the Foreign Ministers in Paris. The President suggested that we might have to indicate our willingness to abide by the results. There was some discussion of how to phrase the question so that it would favor neither side. The President rather liked: "Mr. Khrushchev has made a proposal for changing the status of Berlin. Do you support this?"

13. The President mentioned Senator Case's letter dealing with the possibility of a canal from Czechoslovakia.

14. It was agreed that the decision to propose a Four Power Foreign Ministers' meeting in early October should not be firmly taken in Paris, but should be referred to the Heads of Governments. The danger of leaks would thus be minimized.

15. It was agreed that the U.S. would ease off its present position on paper stamping, letting the UK carry the ball with the French and Germans. This allied decision should be made known later in the year, in advance of a treaty, e.g., in November or December. Meantime, we could see if it could be traded for something from the Soviets.

16. The President mentioned the likely difficulty of persuading de Gaulle and Adenauer to our proposed positions at a Western Heads of Government meeting. The Secretary suggested that, in the end, de Gaulle would probably go along with our proposals, if the President indicated that they were essential to preserve our position in Berlin.

17. There was some discussion of propaganda themes. The President did not think much of the "defaulting trustee" theme. The Secretary said that our propaganda would be geared to the main themes in the President's speech, which was being widely translated and circulated.

18. The Secretary said that we should try now to keep Berlin out of the UN, where we would lack support as a result of Bizerte. We would have to take Berlin to the UN, however, if there were a peace treaty and moves were made against our access.

19. The discussion turned away from Berlin:

(a) The Secretary thought that negotiations over Bizerte would succeed if they could get started but that

neither side

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neither side wanted to make the first move. He would probably see de Gaulle about this subject in Paris.

(b) Pereira (the number two man in Portugal) is coming here as Ambassador. We can probably deal with his government more effectively through him than we could have through the high level U.S. envoy who had been considered. The Secretary reported that German Defense Minister Strauss had, by his own account, told Salazar to straighten out his policy on Angola -- in which case the Germans would give him substantial aid.

(c) The President wondered whether he should send a letter to Chiang expressing satisfaction with the recent Washington talks and discussing the Outer Mongolian issue. The Secretary suggested that he wait until we could consult with the Afro-Asians; assurances of their support were needed before embarking on the intended course of action.

(d) The Secretary said that he would try to move the French to greater flexibility in their views about a disarmament forum.

(e) The Secretary suggested that the President go to the General Assembly early in the session, that the Secretary should stay on to 7 - 10 days to see all the Foreign Ministers, and that Ambassador Stevenson should be left to carry the general debate.

(f) The Secretary reported that Chairman Morgan would have two Congressional nominations for the General Assembly on Monday.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
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EYES ONLY

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Meeting of the Steering Group, August 2, 1961, 4:00 p.m.

Present were: Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, The Attorney General, Chairman JCS, Director CIA, Mr. Sullivan of the Treasury Department, Mr. Wilson of USIA, General Taylor and Mr. Bundy

The Secretary opened the meeting by circulating a memorandum from the operations center describing the progress of the working group sessions in Paris. The Secretary described his own itinerary for the week of his absence.

He then turned to the question of the timing and form of discussions with the USSR. He expressed his view that Ambassador Thompson, perhaps with associates, might meet with Khrushchev later in August in an attempt to get him to talk and to clarify certain aspects of the Soviet position. The Secretary also expected that there would be discussion in Paris of a four-power meeting of the Foreign Ministers, and that such a possibility and our favorable view of it should be known before the General Assembly opens. It would not be to our advantage to have early discussion of Berlin in the UN, partly because of the Tunisian affair. The Secretary believed that a Western summit would be needed before the Foreign Ministers' meeting.

*not attached when*

The immediate and urgent problem was propaganda, and there followed an extensive discussion of ways and means of making our case more strongly all around the world. Mr. Wilson presented a number of ideas which are best summarized in his supplementary memorandum (attached) of the following day. The Attorney General emphasized the need for a simple slogan or idea or thought which could be continuously emphasized. In response, it was suggested that the main ideas are those already stated in the President's speech; that we should keep the peace and keep Berlin free. A third strong idea is that of self-determination. It was agreed that coordinating and executive responsibility within the Administration would be centered in USIA under the policy guidance of the Secretary of State.

The discussion then turned to military questions, and it was agreed that the Defense Ministers should meet shortly after the Foreign

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Ministers' meeting and that this should be arranged in Paris. The first urgency on the military side is to get agreement among the major Governments on the basic policy of a strong military build-up. The Secretary of Defense asked for further consideration of the political value of certain military actions that might not be immediately necessary for their own sake. He specifically mentioned the possibility of cutting down on the number of dependents in Europe and the possibility of large-scale temporary troop movements of one or two divisions now based in the U. S. It was agreed, in this context, that the NORAD exercise now planned for the beginning of October would be politically valuable. In response to a question from the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense stated that the program for increases in military production is going forward satisfactorily.

*McGeorge Bundy*  
McGeorge Bundy

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14144

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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August 16, 1961

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Group on Berlin  
August 15, 1961 - 10:45 AM

Present: Secretaries of State, Defense, Commerce, Agriculture, Under Secretary Fowler of Treasury, The Attorney General, The Director of CIA, Deputy Director Wilson of USIA, The Chairman, JCS, Mr. Foy Kohler, General Taylor, Mr. Bundy

The meeting began with a discussion of the response by the Executive Branch to new language in the preamble to PL 480. The Secretary of Commerce presented the case for a statement indicating that the United States would not send subsidized food exports to Soviet bloc countries. After considerable discussion, it was the sense of the meeting that such an announcement would be unwise. The President has authorized continuing negotiations with Poland which would involve such exports, and it was felt that an announcement of the sort proposed would be both too sweeping and unnecessary. Instead it was agreed that the Secretary of Commerce would meet with the appropriate members of the Congress, after discussion with the Speaker and with selected individual members of the group. He would explain to them the reasons for avoiding a public statement at this time, and at the same time calm any fears of subsidized exports to the USSR, or indeed to other bloc countries except where there was a special political opportunity.

Turning to the immediate situation in Berlin, the Secretary of State asked Mr. Kohler to summarize recent developments. Mr. Kohler described the progress which had been made through the Secretary's statement, the delivery of the protest of the three Western Commandants in Berlin, and preparation of a protest for delivery in Moscow. The Secretary of State noted that while the border closing was a most serious matter, the probability was that in realistic terms it would make a Berlin settlement easier. Our immediate problem is the sense of outrage in Berlin and

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Germany which carries with it a feeling that we should do more than merely protest. It was not easy to know just what else we should do.

In the following discussion it was generally agreed that economic countermeasures would be inappropriate; either they would be much too trivial to count, like withholding Western participation in the Leipzig Fair, or they might set in train a chain of challenges and responses which might affect our own deepest interest, that of economic and human access to West Berlin.

Similar objections applied not only to such a course as general interruption of travel by East Germans to the West, but suspension of Temporary Travel documents. Moreover, it looks as if the new fence between East and West Berlin is there to stay, and we do not want to reply with temporary and incommensurate reprisals.

The one step for which there was substantial support in the group was the possibility of reinforcements of the West Berlin Garrison. There was no general agreement; and the Secretary of Defense indicated a specific reservation on the ground that such steps, taken as a gesture, were not desirable. His own inclination was to consider some reduction in U.S. military dependents abroad.

The discussion then turned to psychological measures and propaganda. Since it was agreed that, in the words of the Secretary of State, "we must keep shooting issues and non-shooting issues separate", and since it was further agreed that the closing of the border was not a shooting issue, the problem was essentially one of propaganda. We should reap a large harvest on this front. The Attorney General particularly pressed for a new and stronger organization of our efforts in this area; and it was agreed that there would be a special meeting on this subject at 6 p.m., August 15. It was further agreed that Mr. Earl Newsom would be invited to come to Washington to discuss ways and means of improvement of our propaganda efforts on the Berlin crisis.

*Earl Newsom*



W. Brown

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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August 16, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
The Secretary of the Treasury  
The Attorney General  
The Director, USIA  
The Director, CIA  
The Chairman JCS  
General Taylor  
Mr. Foy Kohler

Following is the agenda for the meeting of the Steering Group with the President on Thursday, August 17th, at 5 PM:

1. Report on the allied military build-up.
2. Discussion of the U. S. position on military contingency planning.
3. Propaganda activities.
4. The calendar of negotiations.

James M. P.  
McGeorge Bundy

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There will be  
No record of the meeting.  
Decision to send  
Vice Pres, Gen Clay,  
Bohler etc to Berlin  
per MacG. Bundy, Kohler  
Aug. 24, 1961 meeting.

Ruhel  
Was this meeting held?  
Yes there was  
a meeting 5:30 PM

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Steering Group Meeting, August 17, 1961

Present: The President; the Secretary of State and Mr. Kohler; the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Gilpatric, and General Lemnitzer; the Attorney General; Mr. Dulles and Mr. Murphy; Mr. Wilson; General Taylor, Mr. Bundy, and Mr. Owen.

1. The Secretary of State proposed two actions:
  - a. Reinforcement of the West Berlin garrison.
  - b. A statement of protest by the three Western heads of government.
2. The President decided that the US reinforcement should be one battle group (1500-1800 men). Mr. Kohler reported that the UK had indicated, when reinforcement was discussed in the Ambassadorial Group, that it would probably rest on the modest reinforcement it was already effecting. The French had no instructions. The President said that the allied total should be at least 2500.
3. The President asked about our going to the UN. The Secretary said that there would not be sufficient Afro-Asian support to make a good showing. This might encourage Khrushchev. The UN should be held in reserve for a more important and suitable occasion.
4. The President said that this Bloc move should have been foreseen and that Berlin planning should look ahead to such possible contingencies in the future.
5. The President asked about the timing of the reinforcement and of the tripartite heads of government statement.
  - a. It was agreed that the reinforcement would take place Saturday morning unless a strongly adverse allied reaction developed in the meantime.

b. The

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b. The tripartite statement would also be made Saturday.

6. Secretary MacNamara suggested that (i) this Bloc action might portend a speed-up of Khrushchev's schedule; (ii) our own military preparations should be hastened accordingly. There was some disagreement with his diagnosis, but none with his prescription. DOD proposed to move the deadline by which we would be able to put forces in Europe from January 1 to November 15, and to modify preparatory actions accordingly. Secretary MacNamara indicated that this speed-up would result in some imbalance and additional cost. The air units and Army specialist units would be called up earlier than now planned. Demothballing of ships would also be hastened. The Guard divisions would not be called up.
7. Secretary MacNamara said that the US would not replace the battle group that would be withdrawn from the 8th Division to go to Berlin. He was considering instead some large scale movements to Europe, e.g., moving the stocks for two divisions there. He did not want a decision on this now.
8. The President stressed the need to be ready to frustrate any Bloc action looking to rapid "civilian" seizure of key points in West Berlin. It was suggested that the Communists in East Berlin might become "dizzy with success" and act rashly.
9. The President then directed that the proposed heads of government statement be revised, which was done on the spot. It was agreed that the proposed reinforcement would be announced separately.
10. It was agreed that the Vice President and General Clay would leave Friday evening for Bonn and Berlin, where they would deliver the President's answer to Mayor Brandt's letter. Neither this answer nor Mayor Brandt's letter would be made public. It was agreed that the troop reinforcement might be

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might be credited to Mayor Brandt's request, however.

11. No single announcement of the accelerated US build-up would be made. The steps would be announced seriatim, as they were taken. Our allies would make similar statements of any accelerated build-up on their part. The US speed-up would not be credited to the access closing.

12. The President asked about the NATO military build-up. Secretary MacNamara said that DOD would submit a memo Friday on this subject.

13. The Attorney General asked if more could not be done to stimulate worldwide protest over the East German action. A group will examine this question and report next week. It will include Mr. Dulles, General Taylor, the Attorney General, Mr. Wilson, and Secretary Goldberg.

14. Mr. Dulles reported a call by General Eisenhower about Berlin. A State-DOD briefing team will be sent, with Mr. Dulles, to Gettysburg Sunday, and Mr. Dulles will notify the General.

15. The President stressed the need for balance, in any press backgrounders, regarding recent events in Berlin. We should make clear that we remained firm in defense of our rights in West Berlin, which had not been affected or threatened by those events.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 23, 1961

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Meeting of the Steering Group, August 23, 1961, 3:30 p.m.

Present were: Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense,  
The Attorney General, Director CIA, Director USIA,  
Chairman JCS, General Taylor, Mr. Kohler and  
Mr. Bundy

1. Negotiating Calendar

The Secretary of State circulated a draft of a reply to the Soviet note of August 3, and attention centered specifically upon the proposal in the last paragraph of the draft note that discussion of negotiations should take place between the four Foreign Ministers at the UN General Assembly meeting in September. This proposal was approved. The Secretary discussed reasons for it briefly and indicated that if De Gaulle should turn out to be wholly resistant, it might be better to proceed through other diplomatic channels.

2. Economic Countermeasures

The Secretary reported that on economic countermeasures there is now good clear Four-Power agreement that the next step is to get action in NATO to get agreement in support of the Four-Power position. He warned against the tendency of other governments to wish to be made whole by the U. S. for any losses they might sustain through such application of sanctions, and reminded the group that the current policy of the U. S. is not to offer any such indemnity except in some special cases, as perhaps the fish trade in Iceland. Mr. Dulles called attention to the fact that the Italians might be difficult on this issue because of the magnitude of their Soviet trade, and suggested that they might require special treatment.

3. Military Build-Up

The Secretary of Defense said that the military build-up is proceeding quite satisfactorily. The West German build-up in particular is moving well. General Taylor asked whether we were in fact doing more than we are yet getting credit for. Mr. Murrow warned that he had found universal opinion in Europe that any removal of military dependents would "pull the plug."

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The Secretary of Defense and General Lemnitzer reported that many members of Congress believed we could hardly be preparing seriously for action in Europe as long as we left our women and children there. The question obviously has two sides.

4. Military Planning

It was reported that Four-Power discussions of the possible military planning directive had produced heavy pressure from the Germans against any extended non-nuclear action beyond an autobahn probe. Moreover, a similar lack of enthusiasm was indicated by the British and the French. At the most recent meeting, it was the consensus -- except for the U. S. representative -- that no further contingency planning should be undertaken beyond an updating of papers already agreed. The Secretary of State indicated that this evidence suggested the need for serious conversations at a different level and asked Mr. Kohler to arrange a meeting for himself and Secretary McNamara with the ambassadorial group.

5. East Berlin Access

There was discussion of the restrictions announced on August 22. General Taylor put forward the view that a relatively active response was desirable. The Secretary indicated that it continued to be most important to distinguish shooting from non-shooting issues. Mr. Bundy suggested that perhaps we should now move in the direction of indicating that if the status of East Berlin is to be less and less quadripartite, the status of West Berlin should be more sharply aligned to the Western allies and West Germany. Mr. Kohler left to participate in a Four-Power discussion of the same discussion, and it was understood that the Secretary of State would make further recommendations either to the Steering Group or directly to the President as soon as possible.

6. Information

Mr. Murrow reported a number of items on the propaganda front: our delay in protesting the earlier action had done no good; we were making more money on humanitarian than on legal grounds; the British public opinion seemed to be hardened, though there were no clear statistical measures. Good films were going into circulation on the Berlin problem from both the U. S. and the British side. It was agreed that the joint movie of the President and Khrushchev should not be pursued

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at this time, and Mr. Murrow agreed to inform Eric Johnston of this view. The meeting of the Subcommittee on Propaganda was briefly reported; there will be a proposal for a small action committee to be brought in from outside the government.

7. Negotiating Position

The Secretary reported briefly on preparations for a clear U. S. negotiating position.

*McGeorge Bundy*  
McGeorge Bundy

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TO : The Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S  
FROM : EUR - Foy D. Kohler  
SUBJECT: Meeting of Berlin Steering Group

*J. Law*

SEP 7 1961

The meeting scheduled for 10:00 A.M. on August 31, 1961, of the Berlin Steering Group is being called primarily to discuss the status of Berlin contingency plans with particular reference to the four points contained in the President's memorandum to you of August 28, 1961 (Tab A). The comments below, which you could use as talking points, together with the attachments thereto, are directed at these points as indicated. Mr. Kohler and Mr. Nitze will be present at the meeting and could be called upon as required for further explanations.

A. Civil Air Traffic into Berlin

This subject was discussed intensively at the meeting on August 30 of the Ambassadorial Group on the basis of a paper prepared on an urgent basis by the Berlin Task Force (Tab B). Although the discussion in the Ambassadorial Group ranged over the entire paper, the primary focus was on the question of immediate replacement of civil aircraft by military aircraft in the event civil aircraft refused to fly. This is covered by existing tripartite plans which, however, require governmental direction to implement. On the assumption that events may take place over the forthcoming weekend which may result in cessation of some or all scheduled civilian flights, the Ambassadors are requesting their Governments to make the decision now that military aircraft will be substituted with minimum delay as required.

The Defense and State Departments are reviewing our tripartite and unilateral plans for substitution of military for civil aircraft to be certain they can be implemented promptly.

Efforts by West Germans to fly to Berlin in connection with the Tag der Heimat may be the precipitating cause of Soviet or GDR action, which could result in cessation of civil aircraft operations. The question arises as to whether the initial number of any military

flights

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flights over the weekend should be so graduated as to make it impossible to carry all anticipated civilian passengers and thus exercise a limiting control on Tag der Heimat participants without any overt discrimination against them which would give the Soviets the impression that the Allies were weakening in their claim to air access rights. Although it would be tempting to try to take some such action, it might merely cause confusion without achieving its objective. Therefore, on balance, the scale of the military passenger air lift should be determined by the demands of the situation and our capabilities, without regard for the possible nature of certain of the weekend passengers.

Other aspects of this question on which decisions will be required are those flagged in the summary section at the top of Tab B. These will be the subject of continuing discussion on August 31 in the Quadripartite Group, upon receipt of reactions from Governments to the American paper, and will require further consultation within the U.S. Government before the weekend.

B. Contingencies Arising from Partitioning of Berlin

A paper discussed on August 30 by the Berlin Task Force has been sent to our Embassy in Bonn and our Mission in Berlin for comment, prior to its use in quadripartite discussions here (Tab C).

Apart from this, U.S. instructions have been sent through military channels to the U.S. Commandant with respect to the action to be taken by him in the event various forms of resistance are encountered in maintaining U.S. access to East Berlin (Tab D).

The JCS are understood to be somewhat unhappy with paragraph 6 of these instructions which stipulates that, if heavier obstacles which require bulldozer and/or tanks or demolition to remove are encountered, the vehicles should withdraw and instructions should be requested from higher authority. If it is argued that the Commandant should be authorized instead to use bulldozers and/or tanks or demolition to remove these obstacles, this seems undesirable. It provides no answer to the dilemma as to what we do if the obstacles are removed and further Communist resistance is encountered in East Berlin, or the obstacles are replaced once the bulldozers and/or tanks are removed. A cable reporting initial British and French reactions has just been received from Bonn (Tab E).

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On the basis of an agreement reached in the Quadripartite Group, we have requested our Missions in Bonn and Berlin to consult their British and French colleagues and comment on a prospective instruction that action be taken in Berlin to convey to the Soviets in the strongest terms our attitude on the border situation (Tab F).

C. Extension of Live Oak Planning

A telegram has been sent to General Norstad containing the text of a directive substantively agreed in the Quadripartite Group. However, the British made their acceptance of this directive as a planning instrument for General Norstad contingent upon a copy being given to Secretary General Stikker. The French have so far refused to authorize this. As a result of the discussion in the Quadripartite Group on August 30, the French Ambassador has asked for authority to have a copy given to Stikker provided that the actual presentation to the NATO Council is made by the French Permanent Representative on the basis of a paper to be drafted tripartitely in Paris but to be submitted to the Ambassadorial Group here for approval.

D. Actions in Case of East German Revolt

An agreed quadripartite assessment of the likelihood of disturbances in East Germany has been prepared and sent to the field for comment prior to submission to the Ambassadorial Group (Tab G).

I am sending you separately a memorandum on U.S. policy regarding a possible revolt in East Germany, which is intended to provide a basis for discussion in the Ambassadorial Sub-group on East Germany.

GER;MJH:llenbrand:rmb

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